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SUBJECT: SOMALIA - TFG SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH
ASWJ; SURVIVES AL-SHABAAB OFFENSIVE. PRESIDENT DECLARES
STATE OF EMERGENCY

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1442

[1](#)B. NAIROBI 1337

[1](#)C. NAIROBI 1236

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: As predicted (ref a), Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Prime Minister Sharmarke and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ) representatives on June 21 formally concluded an agreement to cooperate. The Prime Minister told us after the signing ceremony that military cooperation would begin immediately, and that ASWJ forces in Mogadishu would join efforts with TFG forces in the fighting there.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Control of key parts of Mogadishu seesawed wildly in fighting over the weekend. The TFG, after losing control of the towns of Galgalato and Keysaney (on the outskirts of Karan District) on June 17, then abandoned virtually all of Mogadishu's Karan District in fighting on June 19. TFG forces, aggressively assisted by AMISOM, rallied to recapture lost territory June 20, only to see part of their gains eroded in subsequent fighting. The June 19 fiasco prompted the TFG Council of Ministers to appeal for urgent foreign intervention and to the Somali public to defend the TFG against extremists. In a June 22 press conference, President Sharif declared a state of emergency. End summary.

TFG, ASWJ Agree
to Cooperate

[1](#)3. (SBU) On June 21, the Somalia Unit attended the signing of a declaration at the Somali Embassy in Nairobi that committed the TFG and ASWJ to immediately cooperate on "political, security, humanitarian, and development" matters (ref a). Present at the ceremony were some of the ASWJ representatives who have been in regular contact with Embassy Addis Ababa. One of them, Abdulkadir Moallin Noor, signed for ASWJ and noted unenthusiastically in his remarks that "any government is better than no government at all." (Note: Prime Minister Sharmarke signed for the TFG.)

[1](#)4. (SBU) In a conversation following the signing, TFG Prime Minister Sharmarke told us that ASWJ had agreed to begin immediate military cooperation with the TFG. ASWJ was to provide the TFG with a roster of its troops for incorporation into the TFG. Sharmarke noted that ASWJ (or at least the faction the TFG was negotiating with) is strongest in Galgaduud Region and the towns of Mahaday, Jowhar, and the capital of Mogadishu.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Sharmarke predicted that ASWJ would "come into the government and gradually" increase its influence. Both sides were appointing small teams to negotiate ASWJ's entry into the government, in particular what ministries it would receive, he said. The PM thought that ASWJ's need for

consensus would slow that process. (Note: Somalia Unit will follow up with ASWJ in the next two days for their take on the agreement.)

Wild Swings in
Mogadishu Fighting

¶16. (SBU) The signing was good news against the background of the assassination of TFG Minister of National Security Omar Hashi (ref b) and the near rout of TFG forces in Mogadishu on June 19. Most TFG interlocutors believed that Hashi's June 18 murder had emboldened al-Shabaab's June 19 rampage into the strategic Karan District of Mogadishu. (Note: The al-Shabaab occupation of Karan, even if temporary, is significant for three reasons: it was not taken from the TFG while Abdullahi Yusuf was President, it is home to current President Sharif's Abgal sub-clan, and it is an elevated area from which it is easier to mortar both Villa Somalia and the seaport.)

¶17. (SBU) The June 19 al-Shabaab conquest of Karan had been preceded by the taking of the town of Galgalato on June 17, followed immediately by incursions into the Karan outskirts of Keysaney (ref c). Sources tell us that a significant number of TFG forces were killed in the Galgalato fighting, and a few were captured and executed by al-Shabaab.

¶18. (SBU) In dozens of frantic telephone calls from Mogadishu during the June 19 fighting, a clearly unnerved TFG described its security forces as fleeing without a fight as al-Shabaab troops advanced into Karan District. By early evening,

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al-Shabaab troops had surged past the Global Hotel, the "safe" home for TFG parliamentarians at the Karan - Shibis border. A key TFG figure told us that at one point escape routes to the seaport and airport from Villa Somalia had been completely cut off. One prominent MP, Mohammed Hussein "Engineer" Addow, was killed while fighting and, according to the Prime Minister and others, beheaded by al-Shabaab forces. (Note: Addow was an Abgal warlord turned MP who had actively rallied clan militia in support of the government.)

¶19. (SBU) When fighting resumed on June 20 the TFG, after repelling al-Shabaab attacks in Yaqshiid District and at the Sana'a junction, seemed to have the upper hand. It quickly pushed al-Shabaab from Shibis District, then won control of Karan. TFG advances seemed to be thanks to the fighting of the original, Ethiopian-trained troops and members of Yusuf "Indha Adde's" militia. AMISOM at a minimum provided mortar cover for some of the TFG's successes and some sources suggest AMISOM was perhaps doing even more for the TFG. There were rumors of comparatively large al-Shabaab losses at June 20 fighting near the Sana'a junction area.

¶10. (SBU) The TFG's June 20 successes were somewhat undercut on June 21, with an al-Shabaab re-incursion into the Mareno area, in Karan District (near the old seaport). We are told that AMISOM shelling of the Sana'a junction, following a TFG tipoff, resulted in the deaths of a number of al-Shabaab combatants. There were no reports of fighting on the morning of June 22.

¶11. (SBU) The June 19 rout catalyzed an emergency session of the TFG's Council of Ministers which produced a resolution requesting immediate foreign intervention, asking President Sharif to declare a state of emergency, petitioning for humanitarian assistance, and appealing to Somalis to defend Somalia against "extremists." TFG Speaker "Madobe" followed the resolution with an appeal urging Somalia's neighbors to intervene within twenty-four hours. (Note: Ethiopia is reported in the media to have rejected the appeal. We understand that the governments of Kenya and Djibouti are actively considering some form of participation.)

¶12. (SBU) Hisbul Islam Chairman Hassan Dahir Aweys told the media that the TFG's appeals only confirmed that it was a creation of foreign governments. "If (the TFG) can't perform," he said, "it should cease to exist."

¶13. (SBU) In an early afternoon June 22 press conference, President Sharif heeded the Council of Minister's appeal and declared a state of emergency. He also condemned international terrorist groups operating in Somalia.

Comment

¶14. (SBU) It is difficult to judge from a distance what exactly happened during the June 19 - 21 fighting, but the near rout of the TFG on June 19 appears to confirm that its forces are still handicapped by an absence of training, sufficient logistical capabilities, and capable battlefield tactics. AMISOM most likely played a significant role in reversing the TFG's near disappearance from Mogadishu, and it appears that AMISOM forces were in no danger of being overrun by al-Shabaab at any point during the fighting. The weekend's events make it clear that the TFG needs urgently to be supplied with military advisors, communications, and a program of on site training if it is to have a chance of becoming a significant force on the ground in Mogadishu. ASWJ troops in Mogadishu in the near term will show the same reluctance to cooperate that plagued the February merger of TFG and ARS forces following the election of Sheikh Sharif. RANNEBERGER